

## Frequently asked Questions for SMME Traders and Travellers

### 1. Please explain what is meant by “Traders” and “Travellers”?

Travellers are persons (covered under Section 15 of the Customs and Excise Act no 91 of 1964) entering or leaving the Republic. Traders are persons or companies who move Cargo. Most Customs Branch Operations separate travellers and cargo movements. Since we cater for both, it is for this reason that our Division’s name is SMME Traders and Travellers - for as long as they are within the umbrella of Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMME).

### 2. Do you have a list of companies offering import and export training?

We are unable to provide a list of service providers who conduct these trainings on their own. However we collaborate with stakeholders such as SEDA, the Department of Small Business Development (DSDB) and many more to provide free workshops to SMMEs. These trainings will always be announced on the SARS website and social media pages, as well as on the platforms of partner stakeholders.

### 3. Are there any duties imposed on exports? If yes, on which commodities?

Generally there are no duties except for exceptional commodities, for example export duty on scrap metal was legislated recently.

### 4. Where do we get tariff codes?

See the [Harmonised Tariff Classification System/Book](#).

### 5. What procedures must be followed in order for supplements (vitamins) to be imported e.g. into South Africa from the United States and India?

This is controlled by Department of Port Health and it is advisable to liaise with them prior to importation or exportation. [See our list for Prohibited and Restricted Goods](#). You can also see our [Policy on Prohibited and Restricted Goods](#).

### 6. Does a company need an import and export license when facilitating an export transaction?

Kindly refer to the [Policy for Registration, Licensing and Designation](#) (pages four and five).

### 7. Does SARS have a list of accredited clearing agents?

We have a strict confidentiality clause that prohibits us to disclose the tax affairs of any person or company or Clearing Agent.

**8. How long does it take SARS to issue an Import and Export code to first time applicants (SMME)?**

For import and export applications, turnaround time is five working days.

**9. Where can I get information on import/export training offered by SARS?**

We will advertise training on our social media pages and website and our partner stakeholders will also announce such training. Keep an eye on our [Small Businesses Traders and Travellers webpage](#).

**10. Are municipal health certificates mandatory for exporting food products no matter the destination?**

Import or export certificates will have to be issued at a government level for the receiving country to accept. Municipal certificates would be for local use only.

**11. Do you always need customs broker to facilitate the clearing of goods?**

No, it is not compulsory to use a customs broker.

**13. After completing the DA 185 application form, where do we send it and how long does it take?**

This form must be submitted to the nearest Customs Office for processing, there are address details on the website of the SARS offices. Also see the [Registration, Licensing and Accreditation webpage](#) for guidance on submitting the DA 185.

**14. Does the export/import license expire?**

No, an import/export license does not expire. See [Policy for Registration, Licensing and Designation](#) for more information.

**15. Is it necessary to obtain additional import and export licenses after receiving your Customs number from SARS?**

SARS has its requirements and other Entities or Government Departments will also have their own. Please refer to below for a list of other entities that SARS facilitates requirements for. [See our list for Prohibited and Restricted Goods](#). You can also see our [Policy on Prohibited and Restricted Goods](#).

**16. Does SARS have an import/export duty table to give an indication of tax to be paid?**

See our [Tariff Classification system, lists tariff codes and the applicable rates of duties](#). VAT is often also payable.

**17. Where do we find the tariffs codes document on the SARS website?**

See our information on [Tariff Codes](#).

**18. Where can I get assistance with the SARS EDI system if experiencing challenges?**

SARS EDI Administrators

- Emelia Holtzhausen via email [eholtzhausen@sars.gov.za](mailto:eholtzhausen@sars.gov.za)
- Annamarie De la Rey via email [adelarey@sars.gov.za](mailto:adelarey@sars.gov.za)

**19. How does one initiate an export and Import application?**

See the [DA 185 – Application form for Registration and licensing of Customs & Excise clients](#). Also see [Registration, Licensing and Accreditation webpage](#) for more information.

**20. Are there "special" registration requirements for an export and import clearance agency at SARS?**

We have a standard application processes. We also have clients to whom we give Accreditation status. [Click here for more information on Accreditation](#).

**21. Are Tariff codes universal? Does each country have its own tariff code?**

The World Customs Organization administers the universal harmonized system codes, the first 6 digits are universal and countries may only do their changes to the last 4 digits for their own country needs.

**22. Please advise if an existing Import and Export license needs to be renewed yearly?**

Import and Export client types are not renewed, see the following for more information:

- [Policy for Registration, Licensing and Designation](#) (page 38)
- [Schedules to the Customs & Excise Act 1964](#)
  - [Schedule no 8](#)

**12. How can we obtain the certificate of origin ?**

A Certificate of Origin can be obtained from offices listed under Rule 46A1.02 (iii) after Traders have been registered with SARS. See our [Customs offices](#) here. Kindly visit the [Rules of Origin webpage](#) to learn more about this subject. Technical and interpretation queries can be submitted to [rulesoforigin@sars.gov.za](mailto:rulesoforigin@sars.gov.za). Find the [Registration forms and procedures here](#). The Chambers of Commerce also administers non-preferential rules of origin. More details on the Chambers of commerce can be obtained at [www.sacci.org.za](http://www.sacci.org.za).